

Application Serial No.: 10/673,938
Amendment and Response to August 1, 2006 Non-Final Office Action

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

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The attached ten (10) replacement sheets of drawings include changes to figures so that the drawings are consistent with the Specification. The replacement sheets, which includes FIGS. 1 – 6C replaces the original sheets including FIGS. 1 – 6C.

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REMARKS

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Claims 9 – 12 are in the application. Claims 1 – 8 and 13 – 16 are canceled and claims 9 – 12 are currently amended. Claims 9 – 12 are the independent claims herein.

No new matter has been added to the application as a result of the amendments submitted herewith.

Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Replacement sheets (10 sheets) including formal drawings are included herewith to address and overcome the drawing objections noted in the Office Action. The Drawings and Specification discussing same (paragraphs [0029 - [0034]]) have been amended so that they are in agreement with each other (e.g., consistent reference numbers). No new matter has been introduced into the application as a result of the amendments to the Drawings and Specification.

Claim Objections

Claims 1 – 16 were objected to for further broadening the independent claims that claim a device wherein the pre-amble includes consisting of since the term consisting of essentially limits the claims to the elements of the independent claims.

Claims 1 – 8 and 13 – 16 have been canceled. Therefore, any objections thereto are moot.

In reply to the objection of claims 9 – 12, each of claims 9 – 12 have been rewritten in independent form to avoid any issue regarding “broadening” of the claims. Claims 9 – 12 have also been amended to recite “the flexible material” instead of the previous -- the rope -- in order to overcome the objections based on insufficient antecedent basis for “the rope”.

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Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection of claims 9 – 12.

Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the Office Action's indication of allowable subject matter. In particular, the Office Action stated that Claims 9 – 12 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the objections set forth in this office action.

As stated above, claims 9 – 12 are currently amended, including the rewriting of each claim in independent form and other revisions to overcome the objections thereto.

Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 9 – 12 overcome the objections of record and requests the Office to reconsider and withdraw of the objection of claims 9 – 12 and allow the issuance of same claims.

Regarding the objection to the Specification at page 8, Applicant has amended the Specification to delete all references of more than one embodiment for FIG. 1 (See the Amendments to the Specification being filed herewith). Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to the Specification.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claims 1, 5, and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Grant; claims 2 - 3, 6 - 7, and 13 - 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Grant in view of Fisher; and claims 1, 4 - 5, 8, 13 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Schaber U.S. Patent No. 5,533,952.

The rejections under 35 USC 103(a) are moot in light of the cancellation of the rejected claims. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 USC 103(a) rejections.

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CONCLUSION

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request allowance of the pending claims. If any issues remain, or if the Examiner has any further suggestions for expediting allowance of the present application, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned via telephone at (203) 972-5985.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date